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**WORLD ASSEMBLY OF WOMEN TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
(COPENHAGEN, 21 - 24 APRIL 1969)**

March 1969

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The major propaganda undertaking of the Communist front Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) for the 1959 - 1969 period is its covertly organized and controlled "World Assembly of Women to Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of International Women's Day," which will be held in Copenhagen, 21 - 24 April 1969, under the auspices of an ostensibly broadly representative "international Initiating Committee". The organizers are reported to be in contact with women or women's groups in over 100 countries, and between 1,500 to 2,000 women are expected to attend. Half of the participants are expected to be from Scandinavian countries. It is interesting to note, however, that as of late October 1959 (immediately after the Danish Government had reversed its earlier decision and agreed to grant visas to Soviet bloc delegates to attend this Assembly) apparently only between 200 to 300 women were expected to attend, according to a Danish press report quoting Mrs. Esther Brinch (the chief Danish organizer of the International Initiating Committee, who is a WIDF Council member and a former World Peace Council Headquarters official). In view of the fact that, from the outset, the WIDF envisaged this as a "huge" event, Mrs. Brinch was probably being polite and seeking to avoid any further controversy by announcing such a relatively small anticipated attendance. WIDF affiliates were advised by a circular letter in mid-November 1959 that it would be desirable to have between 1,500 to 2,000 women from the various countries throughout the world attend this Assembly.

The theme of the Assembly will be "The Status of Women Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." The agenda will include the following topics which will be discussed both in plenary sessions and in six study sections which, in turn, will give a survey of the progress achieved by women thus far and make a concrete study of the issues concerning women at this time.

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Homage to the pioneers of the women's movement.
A review of a half-century's efforts: assets and liabilities,
future perspectives.

Role and responsibility of women for liberating the world
from war, hunger and ignorance.

Participation of women in the business world.

Women's civil rights.

Participation of women in public life.

Social achievements permitting women to reconcile their
external activities and their family responsibilities.

Tasks of women's organizations and of all women for an
international detente, disarmament and for cooperation.

Education and cultural development of women.

Each study section will prepare documents concerning matters
discussed for consideration by the plenary Assembly.

The principal speakers on the above-noted agenda items have
been selected by a "working group" in Copenhagen at "closed"
sessions held during the first half of January 1969. The "working
group" is, of course, composed of several key WIDF officials who
covertly control this body and ensure that the Assembly will follow
lines predetermined by the WIDF.

Plans for the World Assembly of Women were first made by
the WIDF at its Bureau Meeting in East Berlin, 10-12 December
1958, at which time the WIDF Secretariat was instructed to examine
all possibilities of holding a huge international meeting on 8 March
1969; to form an International Preparatory Committee "of repre-
sentatives of all feminine forces... no later than April 1959 to
facilitate preparations;" to consult with national organizations on

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the questions of women's and children's rights and problems of peace that could serve as a basis for this meeting; and to ask WIDF affiliates to organize the best activities for assuring the cooperation of women leaders and women's organizations and to contact such leaders and organizations and prominent women in all fields of activity. WIDF affiliates were to undertake publicizing this event in their respective countries, to organize expositions and other events and obtain the cooperation of prominent persons and artists.

The WIDF Secretariat has made considerable progress in implementing the Bureau's directives during the past year. At least three meetings of WIDF governing bodies have been held since December 1958 which, among other things, concerned themselves with organizational planning of this Assembly. It has expanded its Headquarters staff during the past several months by bringing in additional women functionaries--many of whom had had prior experience at WIDF Headquarters--to assist the WIDF in its preparations for this Assembly. In addition, employing the now familiar but nevertheless still effective Communist front tactics of trying to camouflage its organization, control and sponsorship of this Assembly, the WIDF Secretariat covertly organized two international preparatory meetings. From these meetings there emerged an ostensibly broadly representative "International Initiating Committee" that has "fronted" for the WIDF as the official sponsoring group and that has in turn permitted the establishment of counterpart preparatory committees in various countries. Such committees are themselves "fronts" organized and covertly controlled by functionaries of WIDF affiliates at the direction of the WIDF. In some instances, they are set up at the express direction of the national Communist party as well. The following excerpt from an article titled "International Women's Day", which appeared in the 24 May 1959 The Worker (organ of the CPUSA), clearly illustrates this:

"It is not too early for American women to set up committees in various cities and begin to prepare for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of International Women's

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Day, which will be world-wide next March. In the struggle for peace, for democracy, for the well-being of children and for the equal rights of women--meetings, demonstrations, exhibits, can be arranged....

"It will be disgraceful if in the country where International Women's Day had its origin, adequate and appropriate recognition of its history is lacking, while colorful and dramatic celebrations are planned in all other countries. Even a small group of determined women can start the ball rolling in each city....

"Let's set up Committees to Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of International Women's Day--and do it soon."

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the French Communist Party entitled its January 1959 issue of Cahiers de Communisme (its theoretical and political monthly organ) "Women [and] the Struggle for Democracy and Peace" and devoted at least three articles consisting of some thirty-seven pages to "International Women's Day". In a fourth article entitled "The Communist Party and Women," the Communist objectives which they seek to achieve through such unity projects with women are clearly spelled out.

The First International Preparatory Meeting of the World Assembly of Women for the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of International Women's Day was held in Malmø, Sweden, 13-14 June 1959. It was attended by women from twenty-eight countries, most of whom were important officials of the WIDF and its affiliates, including WIDF President Eugenie COTTON and the new Soviet Deputy General Secretary of the WIDF, Maria Skotnikova. (It is known that the incumbent of this position covertly directs the course of WIDF policies and activities and ensures their conformance with and implementation of current Soviet propaganda objectives). Among the participants who appeared to support the WIDF's Assembly plans were also a few prominent women who were officers of organizations not affiliated with the WIDF. This meeting "elected" an "International Initiating Committee" that issued an "Appeal" (copy of which is appended) to "...all women's organizations, all individuals, all others who support the just cause of women, to join the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary Jubilee of International

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Women's Day in 1960." It also concerned itself with the question of "WIDF Prizes" to be awarded to women who have distinguished themselves as leaders or in working for various women's causes.

This first meeting at Malmö decided that organizational planning and arrangements for this Assembly would be carried out by the WIDF at its Headquarters in East Berlin, with various subcommissions specially created to assist the WIDF Secretariat in better publicizing this event and in obtaining the coveted cooperation and support of prominent women and national and international women's organizations not affiliated with the WIDF. Shortly thereafter, specially selected women functionaries began to arrive at WIDF Headquarters in East Berlin to assist the WIDF in its preparatory work for the Assembly. WIDF affiliates were subsequently cautioned to have all their delegates to the Copenhagen Assembly allow at least six weeks for receipt of necessary visas and to organize fund-raising activities to help defray the travel expenses of their delegates, as well as some of the expenses of delegates from underdeveloped areas. The WIDF undertook to defray the travel expenses of only two delegates from each country.

The Second International Preparatory Meeting was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 5-6 December 1959. This meeting "elected" the Presidium of the International Initiating Committee for this Assembly (described below), formally designated 21-24 April 1960 as the dates the Assembly would meet in Copenhagen (not 8 March-- "International Women's Day"--as originally planned), approved the final agenda and appointed a "work group" in Copenhagen to work on organizational problems, propaganda and financing of the Assembly.

Among those "elected" to the Presidium of the International Initiating Committee for this Assembly are the following women who will probably play a prominent role at the Assembly:

Mme. Eugenie Cotton (France):

An ardent Communist sympathizer and Communist-front activist, Eugenie Cotton has been President of the WIDF since its foundation in 1945 and is a member of the

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Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council.
She will be one of the principal speakers at this Assembly.

Mme. Palma Guillen de Nicolas (Mexico):

Former delegate to the League of Nations and the International Labor Office, former Minister Plenipotentiary and former head of the Secondary Education System in Mexico, she has also been a member of a number of Communist fronts in Mexico.

Mme. Rameshwari Nehru (India):

Chief organizer of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and President of its Indian affiliate, she is a leader of the WIDF-affiliated National Federation of Indian Women and President of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society. She is a social worker who is related by marriage to Prime Minister Nehru.

Mme. Nina Popova (USSR):

A candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union since February 1956 and Vice President of the WIDF since its formation in November 1945, Nina Popova also holds the following important positions at the present time: Chairman of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, Member of the World Peace Council, Chairman of the Presidium of the WIDF-affiliated Committee of Soviet Women, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet USSR, Council of the Union and a member of the Foreign Affairs Commission of that Council. She has also served as Secretary and Presidium member of the WFTU-affiliated All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions in 1956 and 1957, and was awarded the International Stalin Peace Prize in 1954 for "strengthening peace between nations."

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Some prominent non-Communist women from the Free World have also been invited to serve as Presidium members, including Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, former U.S. Delegate to the United Nations Organization. Mrs. Roosevelt has rejected the invitation.

In view of the WIDF's covert manipulation and control of all phases of planning and preparations of this Assembly, it is not surprising that several key WIDF functionaries were "appointed" to this "working group" in Copenhagen, including the following:

Carmen Zanti Tondi (Italy): [Usually known as Carmen Zanti]

WIDF Secretary General since June 1957, one of the top three positions at WIDF Headquarters in East Berlin, she has been a trusted functionary of the Communist Party of Italy (CPI) for many years and at one time served in its Central Press and Propaganda Office. She has traveled extensively, both in the Soviet bloc and in the Free World, for the WIDF and the CPI. Zanti has also been active for many years in the Italian affiliate of the WIDF and represented that organization at WIDF Headquarters in 1951.

Simone Bertrand (France):

A militant Communist activist who has been an important member of the policy-making Secretariat at WIDF Headquarters in East Berlin since 1951, first as a WIDF Secretary and since November 1954 as an Assistant Secretary General of the WIDF. In this capacity, she is one of the three most important officials at WIDF Headquarters. She has traveled extensively for the WIDF, particularly throughout Asia, the Soviet bloc and Western Europe. She helped organize the WIDF Conference of Asian Women, which was held in Peking in November 1949. For many years she has been an important functionary of the WIDF-affiliated Union of French Women and 1958 was elected one of its Vice Presidents.

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Gisella Florensi (Italy):

A former Italian Parliamentary Deputy, she was a Deputy Council Member of the WIDF from 1945 to 1948 and has been a Secretary of the WIDF since June 1958. In this capacity she is a member of the policy-making Secretariat at WIDF Headquarters. Such positions are given only to trusted, experienced Communist functionaries. She has attended WIDF meetings during these periods, both in the Free World and the Soviet bloc.

Lydia Petrova (USSR):

WIDF Council Member since at least 1948 and Secretary General of the Soviet affiliate of the WIDF since at least 1954. In this capacity, she controls not only the directives of the Committee of Soviet Women but indirectly those of the WIDF as well through her continuing relationship with, and authority over, the Soviet Assistant Secretary General at WIDF Headquarters (Maria Shotelkova). She is also Vice President of the Society for Soviet-Indian Friendship and a Doctor of History. She has traveled extensively throughout the world and has successfully broadened the contacts of the Committee of Soviet Women with women's organizations, including many non-Communist and leftist groups, throughout the world.

Kether Brinch (Denmark):

Chief Danish organizer of the International Initiating Committee for the World Assembly of Women in Copenhagen, 21-24 April 1969, she has been a WIDF Council Member since June 1958 and is currently President of the WIDF-affiliated Danish Democratic Women's Federation. She has been active for several years in the Communist front "peace" movement and was a World Peace Council Headquarters official for a while. Mrs. Brinch has worked for the Danish Government for many years.

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as an authorized German translator. She is a member of the Danish Radical Liberal Party and, like many members of that party, is strongly opposed to German rearmament. In 1950 she was Chairman of the non-Communist Danish One World Organisation, and in 1955 was a member of the Headquarters Committee of the Open Door International (For Economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker), also a non-Communist body.

Emilie Steux Brunstet (Belgium):

A member of the Belgian Communist Party since before World War II, she is a member of the WIDF affiliate in Belgium and an Executive Committee Member of the Belgian affiliate of the World Peace Council, a group that actively supports WIDF activities as well. She has attended WIDF and WPC meetings and visited Communist China in May 1959 as a member of the Belgian WIDF affiliate's delegation.

At these "closed" meetings in early January 1960, the "working group" decided who the principal speakers would be on each Assembly agenda item, and generally concerned themselves with various organizational problems, including publicity for and financing of the Assembly.

The appointment of a special body to work "on-the-spot" for several months in advance of an international Communist front event is now fairly standard practice. This specially constituted body invariably gives titled positions of seeming importance to representatives of bona fide, non-member organizations as ostensible evidence of its "legitimacy" and representativity, while the "sensitive" control positions of any real significance are given to trusted Communist cadre functionaries of the sponsoring Communist front, or in this case, the WIDF. Such functionaries usually transfer from the Headquarters of the covert international front sponsor when such an "on-the-spot" preparatory body is formed, or are functionaries who have had considerable prior experience

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in organizing such events for the front in question. This would appear to hold true in the case of the "working group" in Copenhagen. Parallel with the operation of such an "on-the-spot" preparatory body--the Copenhagen working group in this case--the covert international front sponsor (or the WIDF in this case) not only continues to tighten up organizational preparations by maintaining a steady check on its affiliates' preparatory problems and progress, but also by providing them and the "working group" with diverse kinds of necessary "support".

A partial insight into the preparatory role played by the WIDF Headquarters is provided by a WIDF circular letter to its affiliates of late December 1959 which first advised that the following "official documents emanated from this [second international preparatory] meeting: the Declaration of the Initiating Committee, the program of the World Assembly of Women, the list of the presidium members, and the names of the adherents and other information [which] will be printed in a folder and distributed from Copenhagen, we hope, the first half of January 1960." It then advised its affiliates, "We must insist that you let us know the names and titles of the people in your country who are adherents of the Initiating Committee. We request that you send us this information as quickly as possible so that it can be used in this folder." The propaganda importance the WIDF attaches to receipt of the names of such adherents is attested to by the strong, insistent language used in this letter.

According to literature emanating from the "International Initiating Committee" in Copenhagen, some twenty-five persons have been identified either as having attended the 3-6 December 1959 International Preparatory Meeting in Copenhagen or as "adherents" of the Committee. Of these twenty-five only nine are not known to have previously supported Communist-front sponsored activities. The following nine women appear to fall into this category, thus indicating some measure of the success achieved by the WIDF thus far in eliciting support of prominent women and representatives of organizations not affiliated with the WIDF:

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Mme. Marguerite Thibert (France):

Member of Presidium of the International Initiating Committee; former head of the Department for Women's and Youth's Labor of the International Labor Office (a Specialized Agency of the UN); a Ph. D.

Mme. Sarah Kielberg (Denmark):

Doctor of Psychiatry and Neurology who has been active in women's activities for some time; the former President of the "Zonta" Club of Denmark and an Executive Committee Member of the Danish affiliate of the Open Door International, which is described below.

[Note: This club is the Danish affiliate of the "Zonta International", a bona fide organization of executive women having 13,500 members in 15 Free World countries. Its professed aims are, among other things, to "improve legal, political, economic and professional status of women...to work for advancement of understanding, goodwill and peace through a world fellowship of executive women in business and the professions..."]

Mme. Noëly Watin (France):

Barrister at the Court of Paris and Secretary-General of the International Federation of Women Members in the Law Profession.

[Note: Information on this organization is not available at this time.]

Mme. Yvonne Tolman-Guillard (France):

Barrister at the Court of Paris and President of the French Association of Women Members in the Law Profession.

[Note: She attended the first and second international preparatory meetings for the World Assembly of Women in June and December 1959, and she apparently heads the French affiliate of the International Federation of Women Members in the Law Profession.]

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Mme. Giovanna Pratelli (Italy):

Member of Presidium of International Committee; barrister, President of the International Federation of Women Members in the Law Profession, and, according to 1936 Who's Who, is co-director of two Italian-language legal publications, The Court of Brescia and Venice and the Forensic Bulletin. Born in 1893 in Milan but lives in Venice.

[Note: The fact that Mme. Pratelli is President of the International Federation of Women Members in the Law Profession suggests that it has an affiliate in Italy. Since French officials of this body are also supporting this Assembly, it appears to be one in which the WIDF has considerable, although hitherto unsuspected, influence.]

Mme. Dr. Teresita Sandoski Scelba (Italy):

President of the International Alliance of Women (IAW) and a physician and surgeon.

[Note: The IAW is a bona fide organization that was founded in 1904 and has affiliates in thirty-three countries of the Free World. It enjoys consultative status B with the UN Economic and Social Council, as well as UNESCO and ILO relations. Mme. Scelba was previously an Executive Committee member of the IAW. The professed aims of the IAW are to "secure enfranchisement for the women of all nations and promote all reforms necessary to establish a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities between men and women. . . ."]

Mme. Cisse Fatou Aribot (Guinea):

Secretary General of the Union of Women of West Africa.

[Note: Information about this organization is not available at this time.]

Mme. Ada Ferriert Bassini (Italy):

Vice President of the Italian National Council of Women and Counsellor of the Italian Women's Alliance.

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(Note: These appear to be Italian affiliates of the IAW (described above) and of the International Council of Women (ICW). The ICW is also a bona fide organization that was founded in 1888 and consists of affiliates in thirty-four countries of the Free World. It cooperates with the IAW and has consultative status B in the UN ECOSOC and working relations with the following Specialized Agencies of the UN: Food and Agricultural Organization, UNESCO and the UN International Children's Emergency Fund. The professed aims of the ICW are to "bring together women's organizations of all races, creeds and classes from all parts of the world for consultation on action to be taken to promote the welfare of mankind, of the family, and of the individual; to work for the removal of all disabilities for women."⁷

Mrs. Anne K. Eaton (USA):

Member of Presidium of the International Initiating Committee.
 (Note: Mrs. Eaton and her husband, Cyrus Eaton, have been active organizers and supporters of the Pugwash Movement during 1958 and 1959, in which the World Federation of Scientific Workers and scientific personalities from the Bloc have participated. She traveled to the Soviet Union in 1958. Several articles concerning her have appeared in Soviet Woman (official monthly organ of the Soviet Women's Committee and the Central Council of Trade Unions of the USSR). The June 1959 issue of Soviet Woman carried an article in which Mrs. Eaton is quoted as saying the following: "Women must take the responsibility for better relations between nations.... What is needed more than astute statesmanship or massive retaliation is the wisdom of mothers who know that people the world over are the same. Civilization is in danger. Women have the obligation to speak up forcefully for sanity in international relations and must insist that the bomb testing which endangers the health of children and children not yet born must be stopped. What is needed is an international meeting of women and the slogan, 'Women of the world, unite! Your children are in danger.' " The article stated that Mrs. Eaton has been making many speeches to women's clubs throughout the United States. The December 1959 issue of Soviet Woman

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quoted Mrs. Eaton as saying,

"The Fiftieth Anniversary of International Women's Day is a very significant occasion. I feel sure that the future of this great organization will have a profound influence in the course of history...."

It may be noted that Mme. Anna Westergaard of Denmark is being used by the International Initiating Committee in Copenhagen (of which she is a member of the Presidium) to cosign its correspondence, along with Mrs. Esther Brinch. In view of the fact that Mme. Westergaard is now almost eighty years old and largely inactive, it is apparent that the WIDF organizers are trying to exploit her prominence as a Danish feminist leader for almost fifty years, her thirteen years as a member of the Danish Parliament, her former position as Directress of Traffic of the Danish State Railroads and her current position as President of the Open Door International. Although Mme. Westergaard has in the past supported some Communist front "peace" and women's groups, such support has been in line with her ardent espousal of all female causes. The Open Door International (For the Economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker, or ODI), of which Mme. Westergaard is now President, is a bona fide organization established in 1929. It has affiliates in ten countries in the Free World, and its professed aims are to "secure that a woman shall be free to work and protected as a worker on the same terms as a man and that legislation and regulations dealing with conditions, hours, payment, entry and training shall be based upon the nature of the work and not upon the sex of the worker...", etc. The Open Door International has consultative "register" status with the UN ECOSOC.

Reports of the WIDF Council Meeting in Prague in October 1959 clearly indicate that the WIDF intends to use this Assembly and the worldwide preparations for the 50th anniversary of International Women's Day celebrations in two important ways. First, to create the broadest possible support for the current Soviet peace and disarmament policies and to use such support to "pressure" Free World Governments into accepting Soviet peace and disarmament policies. Italian Communist WIDF Secretary General Carmen Zanti called "for the stepping up of the women's struggle in capitalist

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countries and colonies in defense of their rights and stressed that this movement was indivisible from the fight for peace." Czech Deputy Premier Ludmila Jaskovcova told the WIDF Council: "The celebration of the 50th anniversary of International Women's Day falls into this historically important period in which the fate of all mankind is being decided. I am convinced that democratic women in the whole world are prepared to celebrate this day in dignity and that they will use, for their intensified propaganda work, the time before the new meeting of the heads of government of the great powers in order to mobilise all women in the world for the struggle against war." Reports indicate that many WIDF affiliates have been organizing signature collection campaigns to present the WIDF on this occasion with a demonstration of the solidarity of women's support of the Soviet peace and disarmament proposals.

Reports also indicate that the WIDF intends to use the Assembly and the preparatory activities as a means of obtaining the broadest possible unity of action (from above and below) with non-Communist, non-member women's organizations, prominent women leaders and unorganized women in the Free World. Where such unity has been achieved in other covertly organized activities of the WIDF, such as the Meetings of European Women on Peace, Disarmament and Atomic Problems held in Rome and Brunate, Italy in May and July 1959, WIDF has sought to extend it to support of the Copenhagen World Assembly of Women in April 1960, and more generally to other WIDF activities of mutual interest. This tactic has apparently been fairly successful since many of the "adherents" of the Assembly are women who attended one or both of the Meetings of European Women in Italy in May and July 1959. It is, therefore, possible that others who attended these meetings may also support and attend the World Assembly of Women in Copenhagen. Should this be the case, the following organizations might also be represented at Copenhagen:

-The "International Reconciliation Movement", whose French, Italian, and Swedish affiliates were represented at the WIDF-organized Meetings of European Women.

/Note: The International Fellowship of Reconciliation is a religious pacifist movement founded in 1919 that has affiliates

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in twenty-three Free World countries. Its professed aims are "To explore the social and international meaning of Love and Peace as exemplified preeminently by Jesus Christ." Its members refuse sanction and support of warfare and ... strive for social justice and peaceful change by methods conforming to the way of Christ." Individual members of this Movement have participated at conferences sponsored by the WPC, as well as Anti-A and H Bomb Conferences.]

- The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), whose Dutch, Swedish and Swiss affiliates were represented at the WIDF Meetings of European Women.
[Note: The WILPF is a bona fide organization that has been a special target of the WIDF for many years. The WILPF was founded in 1915 and has affiliates in forty-five countries, including Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. Its professed aims are to "bring together women of different political and philosophical tendencies united in their determination to study, make known and help abolish the political, social, economic and psychological causes of war, and to work for a just and lasting peace based on freedom." It has consultative status "B" with the UN ECOSOC and UNESCO and specialized consultative status with the following UN Specialized Agencies: Food and Agricultural Organization, UNICEF and ILO. Some of the WILPF affiliates have been infiltrated by Communists or ardent fellow travellers who, in some cases, have gained positions of influence which they have sought to exploit in support of WIDF and WPC activities. The WILPF has sent official observers to some WIDF and WPC meetings.]

- The Federation of Women Jurists, whose Italian affiliate was represented at the WIDF Meetings of European Women.
[Note: It is not known whether this group is identical with the affiliate of the International Federation of Women members in the Law Profession which is supporting the Copenhagen Assembly. There is an International Federation of Women Lawyers (or Jurists) that is a bona fide, professional organization established in 1944 and has affiliates in fifty-six countries throughout the Free World. It has consultative status "B" with UN ECOSOC and UNESCO and cooperates

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with the ILC. It has an affiliate in Italy.]

-International Cooperative Women's Guild, whose Italian affiliate may have been represented at the WIDF Meetings of European Women.

[Note: The Italian National Committee of Women Cooperators was represented at these meetings. The International Cooperative Women's Guild is a body that was founded in 1921 and claims to have affiliates in twenty-two countries (including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the USSR) totaling 31 million members. Its professed aims are to "unite woman cooperators of all lands...to raise the status of women through the achievement of economic and political equality, and improve their standard of family life; promote education of women cooperators...work for international peace through security and friendly relations between all countries."]]

-The Theosophical Society, whose Italian affiliate may have been represented at the WIDF Meetings of European Women.

[The Italian Theosophical Association was the group represented. The Theosophical Society, founded in 1875, has almost 34,000 members in sixty-four countries of the Free World, and its professed aims are, among others, "universal brotherhood, without distinction of race, creeds, sex, caste or colour."]]

Successful unity-of-action at the national level on specific matters of common interest to both non-Communist and Communist front women's groups may also be extended to support of the World Assembly of Women in Copenhagen. It may be noted that in France the WIDF-affiliated Union of French Women and its Women's Rights Commission is working jointly with ten other women's organizations to defeat certain proposed changes in the French Civil Code which they maintain are detrimental to women's rights. Two of these ten organizations are participating in the international preparatory meetings for the World Assembly of Women.

In view of the fact that some of the "adherents" of the World Assembly of Women in Copenhagen are women who

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served as sponsors of the First Latin American Women's Conference which was held in Santiago, Chile, in November 1959 and which was also covertly organized by the WIDF, some non-member women's organizations that were represented at this meeting might also be represented at the Copenhagen Assembly in April 1960. Most non-member organizations, however, withdrew from and repudiated this Conference before it convened. In any event, at the suggestion of WIDF President Eugenie Cotton, the Santiago Conference did adopt a special recommendation calling for preparations for the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of International Women's Day to begin at once.

That the WIDF intends to use the Copenhagen Assembly as an "anti-colonial" tribune is implicit in its postponement of this Assembly from 8 March 1960 (which is International Women's Day) to 21 - 24 April 1960. The 24th of April is the anniversary of the now "historic" 1955 Bandung Conference which adopted the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence", a date which follow Communist fronts--the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Union of Students and their affiliates--have sought to exploit by worldwide celebrations and fund-raising campaigns as the "Day of Solidarity Against Colonialism and for Peaceful Coexistence". The Afro-Asian Women's Conference is scheduled to open in Cairo in September under the sponsorship of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Council. It may be noted that Bameshwari Nehru (a Presidium member of the International Initiating Committee for the World Assembly of Women in Copenhagen and a key figure in the Indian Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Council) has been in contact with the principal UAR organizer of the Cairo Conference. The Copenhagen Assembly's anti-colonial arguments will, however, probably be keyed more to "peace" and "national development" slogans than to aggressive "national liberation" demands.

Postponement of the Copenhagen Assembly also serves the additional useful purpose of permitting the great variety of worldwide "International Women's Day" activities on or about 8 March 1960 to be used as preparatory events for the Copenhagen Assembly.

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Delegates may be selected and funds raised to help defray their travel expenses. Reports indicate that the organizers consider these activities of considerable importance and effectiveness in activating women of varying political orientation from the local to the national level. They include a great variety of preparatory activities from the local to the national level, such as large national assemblies with specially invited foreign guests. These assemblies, in effect, treat all the agenda items of the Copenhagen Assembly and in many cases are preceded by numerous specialized local and provincial meetings whose programs are tailored to problems of general interest to women (education, health, social welfare, employment, etc.) or to matters of interest to specific groups by profession, occupation, social status or avocation (legislators, teachers, workers, peasant women, housewives, artists, athletes, etc.). In some countries special seminars are planned in which delegates can become familiar with the proper lines to be taken at the Assembly. These will also provide useful experience in dealing with any counter arguments that might be raised at the Assembly. The French Communist Party has, for example, emphasized that all elements of the Party are responsible for "intensifying the ideological struggle" among women, by denouncing all efforts to keep women's activities apolitical and by explaining in Communist terms the real origins of the problems which interest women.

In some countries WIDF affiliates plan to award "International Women's Day" prizes to women who have distinguished themselves in some fashion. Most WIDF affiliates and "national preparatory committees" plan to publish special propaganda literature on this occasion (ranging from brochures and cards to magazines and books), and those in the Soviet bloc even plan to produce special feature and documentary films showing how well women in the Bloc live. The WIDF has provided its affiliates and "national preparatory committees" with considerable propaganda material which they can use in compiling their own special propaganda literature, as well as with special stamps, badges, etc. which the affiliates can sell to help them raise funds.

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Finally, there has been considerable international Communist front support of this Copenhagen World Assembly of Women. The World Peace Council's support is implicit from the publicity given it in its official fortnightly organ, Bulletin of the World Council of Peace No. 3, 1 February 1960. Page 14 of this issue is almost entirely devoted to WIDF President Eugenie Cotton's article on the "50th Anniversary of International Women's Day." More frank and direct support of this occasion was given by the World Federation of Democratic Youth at its Fifth Assembly of Member Organizations (Prague, August 1959) when it decided "to participate in the international gathering of women on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of March 8th...." The World Federation of Trade Unions and its affiliates traditionally have supported International Women's Day celebrations, and may play an important role this time as well. WIDF affiliates are making considerable efforts to activate women workers of all types and to establish unity-of-action with them, even at their jobs.

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Appendix*

1919 - 1969

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IS FIFTY YEARS OLD

An Initiating Committee for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of International Women's Day was convened in Malmö, Sweden in June 1959. It has published the following declaration on the occasion of the coming 50th anniversary of March 8th:

In the city of Copenhagen 50 years ago, women from several countries gathered to proclaim the need for women to unite to win their fundamental rights and to exert all their efforts in the service of peace. They resolved to celebrate International Women's Day every year as an expression of the mutual interests that bind the women of the world.

The past 50 years, marked by deep going social changes and scientific and technical discoveries, have opened up grand perspectives of well-being and prosperity for mankind. Notable among the achievements of this period is the advance made by women in all spheres of life. Women have won political rights in most of the countries. They entered professions traditionally reserved for men. In all spheres of life, women are to a greater extent taking their rightful place in society. They are occupying positions more consistent with their abilities, the extent of their qualifications and the consciousness of their responsibilities. These decisive gains have been won by persistent and heroic efforts to which many give their best, and have enabled women to live in greater dignity as citizens, workers and mothers.

Thus a new woman has come into being whose rights are recognized in the Charter of the United Nations.

But all rights have not yet been won. Women in many countries are still deprived of full access to education, the right

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to work, equal pay for equal work, full access to all professions, legal and political equality, economic and social security. To achieve these, all forms of discrimination must be eliminated.

To reach these goals and ensure the continued advance of women in the family and in society, peace and the rights of peoples to determine their own destiny are indispensable prerequisites. This thought inspired the women who met in Copenhagen 50 years ago when they linked the struggle for the rights of women with the safeguarding of peace.

But two great wars and many other conflicts in the half century have brought wanton destruction and suffering to humanity. Today the threat of war still exists and is aggravated by the menace of nuclear weapons and their terrible consequences. It is more imperative than ever for women to unite to eliminate war forever.

Women have a common desire to protect life, the security of the home and the future of their children.

Women of all social backgrounds, workers, farmers, peasants, intellectuals, housewives, women belonging to organizations or unaffiliated, all have rights to win and defend.

We, women from 28 countries from all continents, from different organizations, meeting in Malmö on June 13th and 14th, 1959 invite all women's organizations, all individuals, all others who support the just cause of women, to join the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary Jubilee of International Women's Day in 1969

This day will be a great occasion on which to honour all champions and pioneers who have fought for us, to review the historic past and to draw new impetus from its successors, in order to help ensure further victories for women, which are indispensable to the continued progress of the whole society.

Malmö, Sweden, June 13th and 14th, 1959.

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- This declaration has appeared in various WIDF documents (including the August 1959 issue of the WIDF monthly organ, Women of the Whole World, and official documents adopted by the WIDF affiliates by WIDF circular letter of 29 October 1959) and in various publications of the affiliates of the WIDF.

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WORLD ASSEMBLY OF WOMEN TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (COPENHAGEN,
21-24 APRIL 1960)

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